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FOR NEA/ARP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/30/2017  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [YM](#)  
SUBJECT: DEMONSTRATIONS IN SOUTHERN YEMEN: BUSINESS AS USUAL  
REF: SANAA 2171

Classified By: DCM Angie Bryan for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Tough ROYG measures appear to have been broadly successful at containing rallies in Yemen's south marking the 40th anniversary of Southern Yemen's independence from British rule. Although demonstrations/celebrations took place in Aden, Makulla and other areas, the only incident of note occurred at a checkpoint north of Aden where government forces fired on a crowd, reportedly killing one and injuring two to four others (reftel). RSO confirmed that this incident occurred, and added that he had heard of additional demonstrations in Lahj and Abyan. As it has done previously, the ROYG prevented people from entering the Aden governorate at checkpoints in order to limit the number of protesters in the city of Aden. According to Bashraheel Hisham Bashraheel, international news editor of Aden-based opposition paper Al-Ayyam, the largest event in the city of Aden took place at the Sheikh Uthman bus station, where he said witnesses estimated 30 thousand gathered. (Note. Bashraheel did not see the event himself and in any case such crowd estimates are often overestimated. End Note.)

¶2. (C) The deputy head of the Sisters Arab Forum for Human Rights told poloff on December 1 that she had been in Aden on the 29th and 30th and said that everything was "fine and normal." (Note. "Fine and normal" for southern Yemen in the past few months is a condition that includes public protests and occasional harsh ROYG reaction. End Note.) She noted that, in the demonstration that she saw on the 29th, the demonstrators were trying to "incite" security forces. This statement mirrors what Bashraheel told poloff on December 1. There was a heavy military presence in Aden on November 29, he said, and added that "people nagged the soldiers by shouting ethnic abuse at them from passing cars and motorcycles."  
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